

The Friendly Communicator

August 2026

A Word from the Pastor

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to every volunteer who gave their time, energy, and hearts to make Vacation Bible School such a success this past July. Working alongside our friends at First United Methodist Church made this year's VBS especially meaningful, and it's a beautiful reminder of what we can accomplish when churches partner together in ministry. To every teacher, snack shopper, kitchen worker, classroom decorator, and behind-the-scenes helper — thank you. I enjoyed talking with the kids at snack time and leading them in guided reflection about that day's Bible lessons.

As we head into the final month of summer, let's make the most of it together! Join us for the **church bike ride on August 1st at 3:00 p.m.** — a fun, low-key way to enjoy God's creation and fellowship with one another before the pace of fall picks back up. And of course, the **Wisconsin State Fair runs August 6-16**, so grab a cream puff and enjoy some classic Wisconsin summer fun with family and friends. These simple moments of rest and community are gifts, and I hope you'll take time to savor them.

Beyond these activities, I also want to share something I've been working on behind the scenes this summer. I've been pursuing a Change Management Professional Certificate, which has given me valuable tools for helping organizations — including our church — navigate seasons of growth and transition with wisdom and intentionality. Beginning this month, I'll be introducing pieces of this training to our church council each month, with resources to help us think faithfully about how we grow, adapt, and lead well together as a congregation.

Change can be both revitalizing and uncomfortable, but Scripture reminds us that God is present in every season, guiding us through. **Isaiah 43:19** says, "See, I am doing a new thing!... I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert." Whatever this next season holds for our church family, I trust that God is already at work preparing the way.

Thank you for being a congregation that shows up, serves faithfully, and walks forward in faith together. Enjoy the rest of your summer — I'll see you around the church and maybe even at the fair!

Pastor Stephen

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June 2026 Financial Income Report

General Receipts

Envelopes	\$9,610.00
Loose Offerings	312.00
Church School	89.00
Birthday	5.00
Total	\$10,016.00

Miscellaneous Receipts

Vacation Bible School donations	125.00
MMCC	400.00
Tithely-Indivisible	86.79
Total	\$611.79

Communion Offering

Grand Ave. Club	140.00
Total	\$140.00

Memorial Fund

Con Slaviero	50.00
Total	\$50.00

Mission Offering

America for Christ	150.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	565.00
Milwaukee Community Crossroads	150.00
Total	\$865.00

Deposited Total **\$11,596.00**

August Birthdays

- 1 Lorna Stoecker
- 8 Samantha Moreno
- 9 Alex Moreno
- 10 John Gage
- 18 Rev. John Jones IV
- 21 Irene Quiles
- 22 Steve Brown
- 22 Richard Murdock
- 30 Casey Brophey

August Anniversaries

- 10 Drew & Tara Hettich, 30 years
- 11 Bill & Kathy Schuttenhelm, 47 years
- 15 John & Linda House, 27 years
- 16 Chuck & Vickie Seymour, 46 years
- 16 Peter & Sue Moreno, 40 years
- 28 Rob & Sarah Smith, 16 years

If we have inadvertently missed your special day, please accept our apologies, and let the office know so we can change our records.

Suggested items for the third Sunday (Aug. 16th) food and hygiene collection for the Milwaukee Christian Center are **pasta sauce & toothbrushes**. Please place your donations in the bins inside the office door entrance.

Note from the Moderator: Please plan to join us during fellowship time on August 30th for an open discussion regarding items on display in the sanctuary.

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Parking during State Fair

You may park at Dottke High School in the spaces near the gym (subject to change) as they are doing the roof. We do have a permit for Sunday, August 9 and Sunday August 16 from 9:00-1:00 pm. Any questions please see Barb Winski.

The annual
Corn Roast
is coming on
August 23 at 11:30 am
on the Church Lawn.
Save the date.

Everyone is invited to the **Annual Corn Roast** sponsored by ABMen after worship on Sunday, August 23. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under 12.

The Milwaukee Community Crossroads

The Communion Offering for August is designated for the Milwaukee Community Crossroads. Please be generous!

The Milwaukee Community Crossroads (MCC), located at 807 S 14th Street in Milwaukee, is a multi-service organization that works to build strong neighborhoods full of opportunity. The MCC's work is centered on four core areas: housing, youth development, older adults, and food security. It serves more than 7,500 people each year.

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August signals the approaching end of summer. It also signals the start of the choir year – rehearsals will begin!! This is the time for you to try something new and different. There are many advantages to trying new things – even when they are scary! I have listed some reasons you SHOULD try new things.

Brain and Nervous System

- **Neuroplasticity:** Fresh tasks help your brain grow and form new neural pathways.
- **Dopamine release:** Novelty triggers reward chemicals that boost your mood and energy.
- **Cognitive reserve:** Learning skills keeps your mind sharp and lowers the risk of mental decline as you age.

Stress and Well-Being

- **Lower stress:** Stepping out of a rut breaks negative thought loops and calms your nervous system.
- **Better focus:** Challenging experiences train your brain to adapt and pay closer attention to the present moment.

If you want to stay mentally sharp and socially connected, one of the easiest ways is to join one of the choirs. It will benefit your health and well being and it will benefit the choir! It's a win-win!

Watch the bulletin for the dates when choir will begin rehearsals. Give us 6 weeks and you will find that your mood is better, your brain is sharper, and your social circle is larger. I look forward to working with you.

Mary Schecher

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ABMen

Proceeds from the spaghetti dinner sponsored by the ABMen have been disbursed to support food pantries at several West Allis churches: \$600 to Apostle Presbyterian, \$300 to St. Barnabas, and \$200 to First United Methodist.

Officers were elected on May 31 to serve terms ending on December 31, 2027: President Gary Grosz, Vice President Mike Shawgo, Secretary-Treasurer Karl Byleen, Social Chairman Passmore Felts, and Pastor Counselor Pastor Stephen.

Upcoming events sponsored by the ABMen are the 16th Annual Bike Ride on the Hank Aaron State Trail on Saturday, August 1, and the Annual Corn Roast on Sunday, August 23. Both of these events are open to everyone. Invite your family and friends to join you for exercise and nourishment!

Golden Guys and Gals: Members of the 3G's: Please mark your calendars for 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 23, 2026. That's the day we'll enjoy our annual picnic at the home of Debb and Jeff Jaeck on beautiful Phantom Lake in Mukwonago. After the picnic, we'll cruise the lake with Jeff as captain and Debb as guide to the history and wildlife of the area. Please bring your own meat to grill and a dish to share. Beverages will be provided.



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Vacation Bible Study

We had a week full of meaningful learning and discovery at the Snowball Mountain Challenge VBS last month. Each morning, our “challengers” learned Bible stories, raced through games, created imaginative crafts, danced and sang, explored fascinating science experiments and enjoyed creating and eating delicious snacks. More than two dozen kids participated and learned that with the strength God provides: “I can pray”, “I can share my gifts”, I can be brave” and “I can hope.” And they memorized via song and dance Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” A group of more than 25 enthusiastic volunteers guided the kids and led activities full of heart-conversations and snowy excitement. It was a successful collaboration of faith, friendship and fun with our neighbors at First United Methodist Church, who hosted and coordinated the VBS week. We look forward to continued cooperations in the future, our Father willing.



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SS adult reflection on migration will be in starting in October, details to follow.

We will be hosting The Interfaith Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogue on September 30th, 6pm. Volunteers are needed to help that day and Volunteers to make a vegetarian dish or a dessert are also needed. Please talk to Catherine or Pastor Stephen.

